THE RELIGIOUS

HISTORIAN.

T. FANNING, EDITOR.

VOL. 2. NASHVILLE, MAY, 1873. NO. 5.

THE CHURCH OF CHRIST.

IN HISTORY.

FROM the command of God to Abraham, in Chaldea, "Get thee out of thy country, and come into the land which I will show thee,"—about 1921 years before our era—and the prediction, "In thee, shall all the families of the earth be blessed," we find in the Old Testament Scriptures, abundant evidence, of a coming age, in which universal peace, was to be tendered to all who would accept it. The prophets, who looked forward with the deepest interest to the fulfillment of the promise lived not to enjoy the blessings of the New order. Even, John the Baptist, than whom, a greater prophet had not been born, was not spared to see the King seated on his throne, or his ambassadors on the twelve thrones in the New creation, delivering laws for the government of the nations. It was, indeed, said that, "The least in the kingdom should be greater than he." We have also, seen that, "Before the foundation of the world, the Apostles and others, were chosen by Christ, and after the removal of the middle wall of partition, others trusted through the word of truth, the Gospel of their salvation." Eph. 4-13. We have seen, in our brief researches that the church was preached as, "at hand"—"as coming" in Matthew, Mark, Luke and John. We have traced the Savior of mankind from his miraculous birth, through his preaching for

three years, and six months, with all the stupendous wonders performed by him,and in his name, his promise of another "Teacher" coming to take his place, and lead his disciples into all truth." We witnessed his trial, his condemnation for treason, upon his own testimony, his shameful death, triumphant and glorious resurrection, the delivery of his great commission at Mount Olivet, and his ascension to the Father. We have called special attention to his ascension to the heavens and taking his seat at the right hand of the Father—the crowned and sceptred King and Lord of the Universe, to rule till all enemies should be put under his feet. We saw him "made our great High Priest," by the oath of the Father—"Thou art a Priest, forever."

We have already noted that, the Ambassadors of the Lord and Savior, in obedience to the divine order, waited for the promise of the Holy Spirit at Jerusalem, and when "The day of Pentecost was fully come," "The Advocate—Comforter—New Teacher," was sent. to enable the disciples, to "Speak with new tongues, as the "Spirit gave them utterance," In taking seats on the twelve thrones, at Jerusalem on Pentecost, the twelve Apostles gave unequivocal evidence that, they were the Lord's "earthen vessels" chosen for the purpose of making known the truth to our race. Through them, was fulfilled the prediction, "The law shall go forth out of Zion, and the word of the Lord from Jerusalem." The Savior had said, in quoting this prediction, "It is written that, repentance and remission of sins, shall be preached in all the world, in his name, beginning at Jerusalem." Lu. 24-47. We have also noted, that Peter called the achievements of Pentecost, "The Beginning," which we have thought proper to pronounce,

"THE BIRTH DAY OF THE CHURCH OF GOD."

Still, in our very brief sketches, it is but just to repeat, that we have done little more than quote a few of the scriptures, written by the finger of God, with reference to the setting up the kingdom of heaven, and the inauguration of the new religious order under the Messiah.

If we are not very much mistaken, we have proved that, "the church of the living God—the pillar and support of the truth," rose in majesty and grandeur, at Jerusalem on the day of Pentecost. The Savior just before he ascended, said to his disciples, "Ye shall be witnesses to me, both in Jerusalem, and in all Jedea; and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost parts of the earth." Ac. 1, 8. With the very strong impression that, this is the order, in which the Savior intended to reveal his religion, we will notice,

"THE CHURCH AT JERUSALEM."

The church is called "Mount Zion," "The City of the Living God," "The Heavenly Jerusalem," and as we have already seen, "Jerusalem, which is above—superior, is free, and the mother of us all." When, however, we shall have noted more facts, bearing upon the church, reference to the distinguishing designations, will be appropriate. We desire to look at the first, and all subsequent churches, just as they are described, in the Bible. We have observed that, the King, was received into glory, the Spirit descended on Pentecost, "The Law went forth out of Zion and the word of the Lord from Jerusalem." The disciples were first assembled at Jerusalem, "the three thousand were placed together, with the previously elected, and the multitudes, were of one heart and one soul."

It is reported by the first church historian that, "They who gladly received his word, were baptized, and the same day there were joined together about three thousand souls," "And they continued steadfastly in the Apostles doctrine and fellowship, and in breaking of bread and in prayers; and fear came upon every soul, and all that believed were together, and had all things common. And sold their possessions, and goods, and parted them to all, as every man had need. And they continuing, daily with one accord in the temple, and breaking bread from house to house, did eat their meat with gladness and singleness of heart. Praising God and having favor with all the people; and the Lord added together the saved." Ac. 2, 41-47. This, by all, is denominated, "Sacred History," and christians, in all ages, have very generally agreed, that the Jerusalem church, was first in order, was the mother church, and is still the model church. Hence, we can but

see the necessity of studying most carefully, every thing which has the slightest connection with this congregation. Did we entertain a theory regarding the church, or had we a creed to sustain, it would be in keeping with the times, to refer next, to the views of authors of the various parties on the subject of the first church. We regard it, however, the safer plan, to see what the Scriptures say, first, in the forms of the New Testament, and in the order selected by Divine wisdom. God presents subjects not as man presents them, and if we would enjoy Divine blessings, our safety requires us to speak and think as the Spirit has ordained. The Inspired references to the church, not only at Jerusalem, but in every other place, are quite concise, and yet, they seem to us so pointed, and so necessary, to a clear understanding of the truth, that we cannot well see, how it would be possible to give our contemporaries accurate views, except in the Sacred order.

Through the agency of Peter's first discourse, by the Divine inspiration, about three thousand, were "pierced to the soul," "were turned from darkness to light," "were saved," and placed as one people, with one faith, through the life giving word, and held all things earthly common, for the advancement of the cause of the beloved Redeemer. Soon after the erection of the church, Peter discoursed to the people, from Solomon's porch, in so pointed and demonstrative a manner, that, "about five thousand believed." Ac. 4, 4. This greatly incensed the civil powers, and, "It came to pass, on the morrow, that their rulers, and elders, and scribes, and Annas the High Priest, and Caiaphas, and John, and Alexander, and as many as were of the kindred of the High Priest, were gathered together at Jerusalem, and when they had set them in the midst, they asked,

"BY WHAT POWER, OR BY WHAT NAME, HAVE YOU DONE THIS"?

Never had it been known that, one born blind, could be restored to sight. The man who sat very many years at the temple gate begging, was running into the temple, leaping and praising God, and the effect was so striking that, the rulers regarded it as the only safe course to require the disciples to tell, by what power, or name, the miracle was performed.

This was the first instance, of disciples being brought into a civil court, to account for their canduct, in preaching a new order. With great composure, Peter said to them, "ye rulers of the people, and elders of Israel. If we this day be examined, of the good deed done to the impotent man; by what means, he was made whole, Be it known unto you all, and to all the people of Israel, that by the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, whom you crucified, whom God has raised from the dead, even by him, doth this man, stand here before you whole. This is the stone which was set at nought by you builders, which is become the head of the corner, neither is there salvation in any other, for there is none other name, under heaven, given among men, whereby we must be saved." Ac. 4, 8-12. At this solemn address, the members of the court, were quite confused; for they admitted the miracle, but to prevent a repetition their decision was, to "threaten them, that they speak henceforth to no man in this name."

"They commanded them, not to teach in the name of Jesus." This was also, the first direct collision between civil and religious right. "Peter and John, answered, whether it be right in the sight of God, to hearken unto you, more than unto God, judge you, for we cannot but speak the things which we have seen and heard." It should be noted that, the Apostles claimed the right to "speak what they had seen and heard," but they presumed not to offer any theory, or opinion of their own. There is, indeed a wide difference, between giving what the Almighty said, and offering the philosophical speculations of mortals. When the Apostles, were, "Let go, they went to their own company and reported all that the chief priests and elders had said unto them," and when the brethren heard the sad decree, "They lifted up their voice to God with one accord, and said, Lord, thou art God, who hast made heaven and earth, and the sea, and all that in them is, and now Lord, behold, their threatenings, and grant unto thy servants, that with all boldness, they may speak thy word. By stretching forth thy hand to heal; and that signs and wonders may be done by the name of thine Holy child Jesus. And when they had prayed; the place was shaken where they were assembled together; and they were all filled with the Holy Spirit, and they spake the word of God with boldness." "And the multitude of them that, believed were of one heart and one soul; neither said any, that ought of the things which he professed was his own, but they had all things common." "Such as had lands sold them and brought the prices

of the things that were sold; and laid them down at the Apostles feet; and distribution was made unto every man according as he had need." It may be in place to suggest, that the "community of goods," which existed in the Jerusalem congregation seems not of the nature of Modern Shakerism or after the fashion of any form of Socialism of modern times. The necessities of the time, required each property holder amongst the saints, to place his means at the disposal of the suffering. Like necessities, would require all christians of the present day, to hold their earthly all ready to relieve the distresses of the suffering. The fact is, that amongst christians universally, there is a settled convicction, all we have belongs to the Lord, and should be freely distributed to help the starving.

Some, however, attempted to frustrate the purposes of the Savior, in vain endeavors to conceal their property, One Ananias, with Sapphira, his wife, sold a possession, and kept back part of the price, brought a certain part and laid it at the Apostles feet. But Peter said, "Ananias, why hath Satan filled thy heart to lie to the Holy Spirit, to keep back part of the price of the land. While it remained, was it not thine own? And after it was sold, was it not in thine own power? Why hast thou conceived this thing in thy heart? Thou hast not lied unto men, but unto God? "When Ananias heard these words, he fell down and gave up the Ghost." (expired.) And great fear came upon all that heard these things. And the young men arose, wound him np and carried him out, and buried him." Some three hours after, his wife, still ignorant of what was done, came in. Peter said to her, tell me, whether ye sold the land for so much? She said, yea, for so much. Peter said,how is it, that ye have agreed together, to tempt the Spirit of the Lord? Behold the feet of them that buried thy husband are at the door, and shall carry thee out. Then she, fell down sttaightway at his feet, and expired, and the young men came in and found her dead, and carrying her forth, buried her by her husband. And great fear came upon all the church, and upon as many as heard these things." Ac. 5, 1-11.

"Many signs and wonders were wrought among the people by the hands of the Apostles. And believers, were the more added to the Lord, multitudes, both men and women. Then came also multitudes, out of the cities round about to Jerusalem, bringing sick folks, and them who were vexed with unclean spirits. Then

the High Priest, rose up, and all they that were with him, and laid their hands on the Apostles, and put them in the common prison. But the angel of the Lord opened the prison doors, and brought them forth, and said, "Go, stand and speak in the temple to the people, all the words of this life." They entered into the temple early in the morning and taught. But the High Priest came and they that were with him, and called the counsel together, and all the senate of the children of Israel and sent to the prison to have them brought. But when the officers came and found them not in the prison, they returned and told; saying, the prison truly found we shut with all safety, and the keepers standing without before the doors; but when he had opened, we found no man within. Then there came one and told them, saying; the men whom ye put in prison, are standing in the temple, and teaching the people. Then went the captain and officers, and brought them without violence, lest they should have been stoned." "And when they had brought them and set them before the council; and the High Priest asked them, saying, "Did not we straightly command you that, ye should not teach in this name? and behold; ye have filled Jerusalem with your doctrine, and intend to bring this man's blood upon us. Then Peter, and the other Apostles, answered and said, we ought to obey God rather than men. The God of our fathers, raised up Jesus, whom ye slew and hanged upon a tree. Him hath God exalted with his right hand, to be a Prince and a Savior, for to give repentance to Israel and the forgiveness of sins; And we are witnesses of these things, and so, is also, the Holy Spirit, when God hath given to them that obey him."

The rulers then took counsel to slay them, but through the influence of a Pharisee, named, Gamaliel, a doctor of the law, they were content to beat them, and further commanded that, they should not speak in the name of Jesus, and let them go. "And they separated from the presence of the council, rejoicing that they were counted worthy to suffer shame for his name. And daily in the temple and in every house, they ceased not to teach and preach Jesus Christ." Ac. 4th c. "When the number of the disciples was multiplied, there was a murmuring of the Grecian converts, because their widows were neglected in the daily ministration. The twelve called the disciples together, and said, It is not reason that we should leave the word of God and serve tables. Wherefore, brethren, look ye out among you, seven men

of honest report, full of the Holy Spirit and wisdom, whom we may appoint over this business. But we will give ourselves continually to prayer, and to the ministry of the word." Seven were selected and "set before the Apostles; and when they had prayed, they laid their hands upon them. And the word of God increased, and the number of disciples multiplied in Jerusalem greatly, and a great number of the Priests were obedient to the faith."

Then there arose a most violent persecution against Stephen, one of the seven, and by false testimony, they condemned him, to death at Jerusalem and as the first martyr for the truth of the Gospel. Ac. 6th chapter. The seventh chapter of Luke's history of the church is mainly devoted to the dying address of Stephen. He began with the promise of God to Abraham, and closed with the words, "Ye stiff-necked, and uncircumcised in heart and ears, ye do always resist the Holy Spirit, as your fathers did, so do you. Which of the Prophets have not your fathers, persecuted? They have slain them who showed before, the comiug of the Just one, of whom ye have been the betrayers and murderers, who have received the law by the disposition of angels and have not kept it." "When they heard these things, they were cut to the heart, and they gnashed on him with their teeth." But the servant of God, "being filled with the Holy Spirit, looked up steadfastly into heaven, and saw the glory of God; and said, "Behold, I see the heavens opened, and the Son of Man standing on the right hand of God." Then the enemies "cried out with a loud voice, and stopped their ears, and ran upon him with one accord, and cast him out of the city and stoned him; and the witnesses laid down their clothes at a young man's feet named Saul. And they stoned Stephen, calling upon God, and saying, Lord Jesus, receive my spirit. And he kneeled down and cried with a loud voice, Lord, lay not this sin to their charge, and when he had said this, he fell asleep."

So far, the narrative has been confined to the city of Jerusalem; but God, in the execution of his purposes, saw proper, to place very heavy responsibilities upon the mother church, and therefore, it is proper, in this connection, to notice the scriptures which have reference to what may not be inappropriately called,

THE FIRST MISSIONARY WORK OF THE JERUSALEM CONGREGATION.

"At that time" Luke informs us, "there was a great persecution against the church which was at Jerusalem, and they were all scattered abroad, throughout the regions of Judea and Samaria except the Apostles. And Saul made havoc of the church, entering into every house, and haling men and women, committed them to prison. Therefore, they that were scattered abroad went every where, preaching the word." Then Phillip, went down to Samaria, and preached Christ unto them." Ac. 8; 1-5. When Samaria had received the word of God, it is stated that, "Peter and John, were sent to see the converts who, when they were come down, prayed for them that they might receive the Holy Spirit. Then laid they their hands on them, and they received the Holy Spirit."

We learn, also that, Peter was selected to open the way of salvation to the Gentiles, and that, Cornelius and friends, were really, "granted repentance in order to life," some seven years after the church was planted at Jerusalem. Peter also, passed throughout all quarters, and came down to the saints who dwelt at Lydda; and all that dwelt at Lydda and Saron saw him and turned to the Lord. He visited Joppa and restored the widow Dorcas to life, "and many believed in the Lord." Ac. 9, 42. In the mean time, Saul, the chief persecutor of the christians, was converted, and, "Was certain days with the disciples at Damascus, and straightway he preached Christ in the synagogues, that he is the Son of God." He mightly confounded the Jews who dwelt at Damascus, proving that, this is very Christ." Ac. 9, 18-22. When the enemies sought his life, he returned to Jerusalem, and "assayed to join himself to the disciples; but they were all afraid of him and believed not that he was a disciple. But Barnabas, brought him to the Apostles, declared unto them how the Lord had spoken to him, and how he had preached boldly at Damascus, in the name ef Jesus. And he was with them, coming in and going out at Jerusalem. The brethren in consequence of the persecution, sent out Saul, and brought him down to Cesarea, and sent him forth to Tarsus." "Then had the churches rest throughout all Judea, and Galilee and Samaria, and were edified; and walking in the fear of the Lord, and in the comfort of the Holy Spirit, were multiplied." Ac. 9, 23-51.

The disciples who ware scattered abroad from Jerusalem, travelled as far as Phenice, and Cyprus and Antioch, preaching the word to none but the Jews only. And some of them were men of Cyprus and Cyrene, who when they were come to Antioch, spake unto the Grecians, preaching the Lord Jesus. And the hand of the Lord was with them; and a great number believed, and turned to the Lord." Ac. 11; 10-21. "Then tidings of these things, came unto the ears of the church—which was in Jerusalem; and they sent forth Barnabas that, he should go as far as to Antioch. Who when he came and had seen the grace of God was glad, and exhorted them all that, with purpose of heart, they should cleave unto the Lord." Very soon, Barnabas went as far as to Tarsas to seek Saul, and when he found him, he brought him to Antioch," "where they spent a whole year, with the church and taught many people, and called the disciples Christians, first in Antioch." Ac. 11, 22-25.

Next, Prophets were sent from Jerusalem to Antioch, who signified that there should be great dearth throughout all the world, which came to pass in the days of Claudius Cæsar. Then, the disciples, every man according to his ability, determined to send relief unto the brethren who were in Judea. Which they also, did, and sent it to the elders, by the hands of Barnabas and Saul." Ac. 11, 28-30. About this time, persecution, was renewed, and James, the brother of John, was killed by the sword, and Peter put in prison. "But prayer was made, without ceasing, of the church unto God for him. Herod's purpose was to deliver the Apostle to people during one of their festivals; but while he was sleeping between two soldiers, bound with two chains, the angel of the Lord came upon him, and a light shined into the prison, and he smote Peter on the side, and raised him up, saying, rise up quickly; and his chains fell off from his hands, and the angel said, gird thyself, and bind on thy sandals—and cast thy garment about thee, and follow me. When they came to the iron gate, it opened to them of its own accord, and they went out, and the angel left him. He came to the house of Mary, the mother of John, whose sur name was Mark, where many were gathered together, praying. From Judea, Peter went down to Cesarea, and abode there." "But the word of God grew and multiplied; and Barnabas and Saul returned from Jerusalem, when they had fulfilled their ministry, and took with them John whose surname was Mark"

PART TAKEN BY THE JERUSALEM CONGREGATION IN ADJUSTING THE CONTROVERSY REGARDING CIRCUMCISION IN ANTIOCH.

In consequence of the Jerusalem brethren constituting the first church and having the Apostles, mainly, amongst them, disciples, in distant sections were disposed to look to that assemblage, for aid in matters of difficulty.

"Certain men came down from Judea in the year 56, and 22 years after the inauguration of the New religion at Jerusalem, and taught the brethren, saying, "Except ye be circumcised and keep the law of Moses ye cannot be saved. But they determined that Paul and Barnabas, and certain other of them, should go up to Jerusalem unto the Apostles and elders about this question. Being brought on their way by the church, and when they were come to Jerusalem, they were received of the church and of the Apostle, and elders, and they declared all things that God, had done with them. And the Apostles and elders came together to consider of this matter." The controversy must have been of a very exciting character. Peter first gave a general statement of authority, which he concluded in the words, "God who knoweth the hearts, put no difference between us (Jews) and them (Gentiles) purifying their hearts by faith. Now, therefore, why tempt ye God, to put a yoke upon the neck of the disciples, which neither our fathers nor we, were able to bear." Barnabas and Paul next rendered their report regarding the success of the Gospel in Asia Minor. Next, James answered, "Hearken to me, Simon, hath declared, how God at first did visit the Gentiles, to take out of them a people for his name. And to this agree the words of the prophets, Wherefore, my sentence is, that we trouble not them, who from the Gentiles have turned to God; but that we write unto them that, they abstain from pollutions of idols, and fornication, and things strangled, and blood. For Moses hath of old time, in every city, them that preach him, being read in the synagogues, every sabbath day. Then pleased it the Apostles, and elders, with the whole church, to send chosen men to Antioch, with Paul and Barnabas, viz: Justus, surnamed, Barsabas and Silas, chief men among the brethren. And they wrote letters after this manner. The Apostles and elders and brethren, send greeting, unto the brethren

who are of the Gentiles in Antioch, and Syria and Celicia. Forasmuch, as we have heard that, certain who went out from us, have troubled you with words, subverting your souls, saying ye must be circumcised and keep the law; to whom we gave no such commandment. So when they were dismissed, they came to Antioch, and when they had gathered the multitude together, they delivered the epistle. Which when they had read, they rejoiced for the consolation. And Judas and Silas, exhorted and confirmed the brethren with many words." Ac. 15, 1-32.

Paul and Timothy, as they went through the cities, they delivered them the decrees for to keep, that were ordained of the Apostles and elders, which were at Jerusalem. And so were the churches established in the faith and increased in numbers daily." In the year sixty, or twenty six years after the organization of the church, several eminent teachers, "Took up their carriages (packs) in Cesarea, and went up to Jerusalem. Then went also, with them, certain of the disciples, of Cesarea." And Luke, possibly makes the report, that, "When we were come to Jerusalem, the brethren received us gladly. And the day following ,Paul went in with us, unto James, and all the elders were present. Paul, possibly gave this, as his last visit to Jerusalem, and it was on this occasion, he delivered his famous orations at the city of Jerusalem. In the first, he gave minute details in reference to his conversion; and in the second, he defended his course of life, after getting into Christ. Before him Felix trembled, and said, "Paul, go thy way, for this time, when I have a more convenient season, I will call for thee." In his last public address he spoke to King Agrippa, in the conclusion of which, he expressed his confidence that the king believed, when the poor, cowardly ruler said, "Paul, almost thou persuadest me to be a Christian." Paul was next called by God to "Bear witness" to the truth at Rome, from which he never returned.

We have given as briefly as seemed to us practical, the main facts in reference to planting and labor of the mother church. It will be observed that, in the main, we have followed the order of Luke, and we have made no effort, to give the subject in a systematic, or scientific form. We have had no theory to defend and therefore, we have offered no creed, no peculiar views—for the consideration of our friends. Our effort has been to let the Spirit

speak, in his own words, in every instance; and if the history is not sound, it may be asserted, it is just what God has thought most suitable for us. It contains all that is known on the subject of which it treats. We would also, respectfully suggest, that if we can root out of our hearts seated prejudices, and speak and think in the terms ot the Spirit, there can be but little fear, as to all seeing alike and speaking the same things.

We deem it due at least to the cause, to our readers and to ourself, to offer such conclusions from the matter before us, as may seem of greatest practical value. We do not presume the points in which our readers are most interested, are recondite, or that, they will require profound learning to understand them. We think they were intended for the understanding of all. It should however, be borne in mind that, God's ways are not as man's ways—God's thoughts are not as man's thoughts. Men of the world, are very apt, to look at religious organizations through institutions of the world. We have noticed that, various religious orders in this country, in their zeal to pay homage to our civil government, have claimed that, their churches, are modeled after our republic. Various parties, for instance, boast that, the idea of our American republic originated from the fertile brain of Roger Williams, who settled, and named Providence, Rhode Island. Paul said, "The Lord knoweth the thoughts of the wise that, they are vain." They are still vain. There is evidently, something of deep import, in the declaration, "I will destroy the wisdom of the wise, and will bring to nothing, the understanding of the prudent." Again, he asks, "Hath not God made foolish, the wisdom of this world"? "For after that in the wisdom of God, the world by wisdom knew not God, it pleased God, by the foolishness of preaching, to save them that believe. For the Jews require a sign, and the Greeks, seek after wisdom; but, we preach Christ crucified, unto the Jews a stumbling block, and unto the Greeks foolishness. But unto them that are called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the power of God and the wisdom of God."

We are satisfied, that the Scriptures, we have recited fully authorize the following conclusions, viz:

THAT BELIEVERS ALONE, BECAME MEMBERS OF THE JERUSALEM CHURCH.

When the people heard Peter declare that, God had made that same Jesus whom they had crucified, both Lord and Christ; they were pricked in their heart—(pierced to the soul) and said unto Peter, and to the rest of the Apostles, "Men and brethren what shall we do?" They were capable of hearing, understanding, of believing the words spoken, of feeling the bitterest anguish, and of inquiring as to the conditions of deliverance, from their sins. Peter, as the Spirit directed, told them, "To repent, and each of them, to be immersed, upon the name of Christ, in order to remission of sins, and they should receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. The Apostle also, considered the inquirers quite able to hear the exhortation, "Save yourselves from this untoward generation." The faithful narrator says, "Then, they that gladly received his word, were baptized; and the same day, there were joined, or placed together, about three thousand souls." All these statements, fully accord with the commission, "Go teach, all nations, baptizing them, into the name of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit." "Go into all the world and preach the Gospel to every creature, he that believes and is baptized, shall be saved, and he that believeth not shall be damned."

The five thousand converts, from the discourse of Peter in Solomon's porch, also, "Believed." Ac. 4, 4. In each, passage in reference to the planting of the Primitive church, it cannot be doubted that, all the members, believed with the heart, in order to righteousness, and with the mouth, made the good confession in order to salvation.

IT IS CLEAR FROM THE HOUR OF THEIR SUBMISSION, THAT THE PENTECOSTIAN CONVERTS, "CONTINUED STEADFAST IN THE APOSTLES TEACHING AND FELLOWSHIP."

Like, the "Noble Bereans," the Jews who first turned to God, devoted much of their time and attention, to the teaching of the

Good Spirit, through the Apostles. Many are still realizing that the word of life, affords comfort and strength, and their fellowship is with God, with the Lord Jesus Christ, and with all the saints.

IT IS CERTAINLY TRUE, THE FIRST DISCIPLES, FAILED NOT TO BREAK BREAD AND OFFER PRAYERS TO GOD, FROM THE HOUR OF THEIR BIRTH FROM ABOVE.

The breaking of bread and the prayers, are but parts of each Lord's Day service. We mean, the Lord's day service for all the children of God. It will be noted, that, the saints, the new converts, ccntinued in the teaching, the fellowship, in breaking the commemorative loaf, and in the solemn prayers to God through Christ. The service was merely Christian, and not as is presumed, official.

FROM THE HOUR THE EARLY DISCIPLES, WERE PLACED TOGETHER, IN THE NEW SERVICE, THEY WERE ORGANIZED, TO DO THE WORK OF THE LORD.

The worship, was the birth-right privilege of all the saved Hence, it is written that, "They continued daily with one accord in the temple, and in breaking bread from house to house, did eat their meat with gladness and singleness of heart; praising God, and having favor with all the people." The first members of the church were devoted, 1st, To the Teaching of Christ; 2d, To the Fellowship; 3d, To the Breaking of Bread; 4th, To the Prayers; 5th, To the praises, to God for all his great blessings.

These early converts, all seemed to have been preachers, or missionaries to a lost world. Men and women, went to all parts of Judea, Samaria and Galilee, preaching the word. It could scarcely be possible, to conclude that, a people of so great earnestness and devotion, could fail of success. When scattered from Jerusalem, on account of the persecution, we have seen the saints went forth as heralds of the cross, and living churches sprang up in every quarter. In reference to what is usually denominated,

the "Evangelical, or Ministerial work," we will have occasion to speak more fully, when we shall have noticed the planting of other churches.

It should be kept in mind that, for special service, men were placed in departments, best suited to their age and qualifications, "The young men," for instance, who took up Ananias and Sapphira, and took them to their burial, seemed not only to have been fitted for the office of burying the dead, but from all we can see on the subject, they did the service as an admitted obligation that, rested upon them. The Apostles, at first, spent considerable of their time, in looking to the temporal comfort of the poor, but circumstances soon suggested the propriety, of assigning this labor to seven discreet and otherwise well qualified brethren, designated by the members of the congregation. They were presented to the Apostles, who readily set them to the work. Whether they bore any official title, either from their appointment, or work, we are not advised. Two of them, at least, proved most powerful preachers of the Gospel. Stephen, for his earnest devotion, was the first martyr; and Philip who carried the Gospel to Samaria, from his labor, or otherwise, was styled the Evangelist. He not only gave himself to the ministry of the word; but also qualified four daughters for prophesying, or teaching, and altogether, they accomplished a great work in Cesarea. Ac. 21,8-9.

It may be in place, to intimate that, the Evangelical calling, the Prophetical and all other departments of divine service, require a careful examination. Should we be spared to get the full church records before our readers, we trust, the proper division of labor amongst the saints, will not prove a difficult question. We imagine also, that the whole co-operative labor of the churches, will not only appear natural, but the whole history of spiritual influence through christians, will prove perfectly simple, satisfactory and efficient in accomplishing the purposes of God.

Bro. I. N. Towns, of Morison, T. reports favorably, in reference to several points in Warren, and other "mountain counties of Tennessee, and also of the work in Chattanooga. We regret that, we have not space for the many excellent reports that we receive. We may attempt to give one new's page in our future issues, but be this as it may, our readers must be satisfied, we occupy our space with the matter, which we consider the most valuable.

CO-OPERATION MEETING IN CLARKSVILLE, TENN.

We notice with much satisfaction, a meeting of brethren from several counties in southern Kentucky, and from parts of this State, at Clarksville, Tenn., extending from the 24th to the 28th of April, 1873, for the purpose mainly, of encouraging, co-operation in the churches, especially in the work of evangelizing.

We were much gratified to meet with many earnest and intelligent christian teachers. From Hopkinsville, Ky., we had present, Brother Crenshaw, President of Southern Ky., Female Institute, a truly cultivated christian gentleman; Bro. Geo. Poindexter, a leading elder of the congregation, and a brother highly respected throughout the State; and Brethren V. M. Metcalfe and Doolin, who are devoted to the truth as it is written, and are fully alive to the work of Evangelizing. They regard it as their birth-right privilege, to labor for the Lord, and have no respect for the ritualism of Rome, Geneva, or any other seat of hierarchal assumption. Bro. C. M. Day, of Trenton, Ky., an aged laborer of great power and influence, opened the meeting, and had a controlling influence, in it. Bro. Taylor, of Russellville, a promising young evangelist, was in attendance, but seemed to hesitate in taking an active interest. Many other excellent brethren were in attendance from Kentucky.

Some two hundred brothers and sisters of the Clarksville congregation attended with Brother B. F. Coulter, in the chair, and Brother Streator, the Evangelist, as Secretary, of the meeting. It was certainly proper for the Clarksville congregation, to direct the services, and we wish to say that, Brethren Coulter and Streator, conducted the business with dignity and marked ability. These brethren, with a little more experience in *usages*, will be quite competent to direct in the gravest christian assembly. Bro. Coulter, managed to give satisfaction, without a *vote* or *dissenting* voice.

Brethren were present from Stewart, Dickson, Humphreys, Robertson, Montgomery, Davidson, and perhaps other counties in Tennessee. From Davidson, Bro. Lipscomb, P. S. and Jas. S. Fall, attended, as preachers, and several other devoted brethren were present. Bro. P. S. Fall, it will be remembered, has been a preacher fifty-three years, was amongst the first of the able advocates of Apostolic order and authority, and we presume, there is no living minister, at this day, his superior, in all that pertains to

the affairs of the kingdom. He sperks as one conscious he stands on the verge of time, ready to try the realities of the world to come. He is in his seventy fourth year.

In reference to the business conducted, we state that, Bro. A. L. Johnson, who has proved himself one of the clearest headed and purest hearted evangelists of the country, gave a most satisfactory report of his work for the past two years. Mainly, from the moral encouragement of the Clarksville brethren, and without *legal* pledges, he went forth into the field, and has been successful in turning to the Lord, by some little assistance from other brethren, about three hundred, most of whom are walking in the light of the Lord. He has been amply supplied, and is willing still to labor, in the confidence, that, when the brethren are correctly taught, they will promptly and liberally, *divide* their substance, with all deserving teachers. Other brethren, gave favorable reports of service, in their congregations, and locations of their labor.

With most of the proceedings of the meeting, we were well pleased, and yet, we thought the opposition to the examination of "*plans*," of labor, might have been omitted. Especially so, when we thought, the *plan* under which all in co-operation, were *required* to act, was not free from the *virus* of ritualistic domination. The practice of *pledging* what one will do, before he has the means of knowing, either to spread the Gospel, or "*hire*" preachers to perform what God, has called them to do, is not from heaven. Hoping, however, to be spared to examine, in the Historian, the various departments of Christian labor, we can at present, only recommend to our brethren, co-operation for searching the Scriptures with reference to our means of labor, and the proper arrangement of the Lord's forces in battling against an enemy, "backed up," by all the wisdom of the world. Presbyterians, Baptists and Methodists, be it said to their credit, opened their houses to our preachers. By the special request of the Baptist minister, Dr. Sears, we discoursed to his people on Lord's day evening, on "The Sword of the Spirit—What? Is it, in the sense, of production? or, instrumentality"? The beloved brothers, sisters and citizens in Clarksville, are in the hearts of all who attended. Our host is a Presbyterian, whom we desire to capture, from Mr. Calvin's little party, for the army of kings and priests.

LETTER TO THE MAN IN THE MOON.

On the first of April, as the young people like a little recreation, we give them a letter to a gentleman, they have heard of and seen all their lives, but have never thought of addressing. We suppose the old ladies and gentlemen, who always prefer the solemn and dignified, will not spend much time over it but, we know, they like the young folks to be attended to, and, therefore present it to them.

C. F.

MR. MAN IN THE MOON.

Dear Sir:

You may be surprised to receive this letter, and will not esteem me more, when I tell you, that curiosity, rather than interest for your welfare, prompts me to write you. You may inquire, who is so presumptuous as to address you. I live five miles from Nashville, Tenn. Perhaps you never heard of the little spot, but you shine beautifully upon it sometimes, and your face is very familiar to those who live here, and enjoy your brightness. I will not tell you my age, because girls dont like every body to know how old they are. I should not mind telling *you* if no body else were to know it, but you are so far off, I have to write it, and it does not look well in figures.

I hope your age and experience will prompt you to excuse me, if you do not approve my course in writing to an unknown gentleman. I have heard of you so long, I think you must be very old, and therefore consider it not improper to address you. We wish to know how you spend your time. Down here, we are all very busy. The children believe you burn brush, but I have no idea a gentleman who occupies so extensive a territory as yourself, is employed in so poor a business. I would like to ask you a good many questions if you do not object. Sometimes people here lose their senses, and are called, Lunatics, from the impression that you exercise a spiteful influence upon them, but I think it doubtful. You cannot, away off in your distant home, form an idea of the sorrow you bring to us, if there is any truth in the impression.

Do you attend to any business in our world? I should like to know why people think your influence is so much felt. The old ladies talk about the right and the wrong time of the moon, for

attending to such and such matters. They plant seeds only at certain times, and suppose you prosper or hinder their success. They plant seeds that prcduce large roots when you turn your back on us, and others they put in the ground only, when you are doing your best to be polite, and giving us all the light you can. The colored ladies will not even make soap, no matter how much we want it, unless they think it the right time for you to smile on their kettles, and give them a good article. You must be kept very busy, travelling round the earth nearly thirteen times, while it is making one journey round the sun. I cannot think how you attend to any thing else. Perhaps you are like some of the people here, who always keep an eye on the business of their neighbors, as well as their own. You do not have more than one day and night in your year, do you? I have been told by a friend, that many years ago a gentleman of New York, gave a description of discoveries made by Dr. Herschel, in your territories by the most powerful instruments ever invented. Strange scenes moved before his grand telescope. Flowers of rich hue were expanding in the soft light, and tall beings with waving wings were brightening the landscape. Mountains of Emeralds and Rubies were glittering there, and little lovely lakes, with verdure, rich and beautiful, diversified the scene. Our people were on tiptoe looking, every mail, for wonders from your dominions. Some believed, and others had no faith. Prof. Hamilton, of the Nashville University, very minutely described the instruments used by Herschel. His class listened with wonder. At last, a stupid boy, (boys are stupid things) wanted to know if the Prof. believed all that. The answer was, "he certainly did." The boy said, "he did not believe a word of it." Sure enough, it proved to be a hoax, written by a man of talent, for his own amusement. However, it made the people more curious about your home. They still feel so. I thought I would be the first to write to you and if you answer this, I should not wonder if you were to receive many other letters from our globe.

Will you give me some information concerning our tides? I suppose the sun has some effect, but is it not principally through your influence, that such a stir is kept up? Do you cause the ebb and flow of the waves? It is said here, that "If you were still, you would pile up the waters nearest you, and keep them there." When you are nearest the earth, I suppose you pile the

high as you can, and when you go off to tend to other matters, they take the liberty of subsiding. Do you ever employ yourself, Mr. Man in the Moon, in the study of Astronomy? You have such a good opportunity, away off there by yourself. I should think you would see every comet that dashes by, and the fixed stars and the planets besides.

A powerful instrument has been invented here, in late years, called the Spectroscope. Comets have been examined through it, and new discoveries made. It is thought when a large one again flames over the heavens, Astronomers will become quite familiar with its now unknown wonders. You had better keep your drawers and closets locked, if you do not wish us to peep into them. You have a better opportunity of knowing about comets than any one else. I would like to inquire about them. Several years ago, a comet made its appearance with six tails. How did it get into the possession of so many? Where did they come from? Our Astronomers say, "that a comet forms in a few hours, tails millions of miles long." Do tell me, how in the world, they manage to make such prodigious streams of light, in little or no time. Do they rejoice in many of these "caudal appendages?" May I ask you about your own home?

I should like to know more of your deep valleys and tall mountains. Is your world, like ours, veined with gold, dusted with gems, and lined with fire? Do you travel over it to see, hear and feel? to impress its beautiful pictures on your very soul?—to feel the throbbing pulses, to fill your eye with images of beauty, your heart with impulses of love and truthfulness? Do you see the wondrous harmonies of light, shade and color in the fulness of their glory? Do you admire the blending of hill, vale and stream, and have deep thoughts of poetry and romance like our young people? I should like to call to see you. You are only 240,000 miles from us, and if we improve in building vessels for navigating the air, you need not be at all surprised to see strangers landing on your shores. I would like to make the trip with a company of my friends, and should we knock at your door, I hope you will have many novel and beautiful things to show to us. You cannot tell the interest we will feel.

Mr. Man in the Moon. I expect you see a good many foolish things that take place here. I have been told that young people

in love, become very sentimental when you send us an extra amount of your soft beams. They talk poetry, and some try to write it, They think you inspire them with new thoughts and brighten up what they had before. Even Shakspeare, (I do not know that you ever heard of him) grew eloquent at such times. He says, "How sweet the moonlight sleeps upon this bank. Here will we sit and let the sounds of music creep to our ears. Soft stillness and the night, become the touches of sweet harmony. Sit Jessica. Look how the floor of heaven is inlaid with patines of bright gold. There's not the smallest orb that thou beholdest but in his motion, like an angel sings."

I wish to ask you a few more questions. Do you have forests with their trembling shades and graceful foliage—the glad voice of streams and the low cadence of murmuring seas? Do loud winds roar and rush in fury over your land, darkening your bright waters, lashing into foaming wrath the grand ocean billows—burying the young, the brave, the loved—the bright locks, the manly beauty, the hoary head—surging a wild dirge over their fathomless tomb.

I wish too, to know if you have flowers—flowers fragant and beautiful. We thank our Father in Heaven, for these gifts of love. With them, we deck our young brides, and when our friends go to the Spirit land, we gather the palest and the purest, to place around them. Do you have music—music that calls up the memories of the past, and makes you weep for the loved and the lost? Do you have music, that in its low, clear silvery gushing rests upon tones of sadness, with a fond and plaintive lingering? A voice of melody solemn yet sweet? Has death ever visited your world? Has he taken from you, the young, the beautiful, and laid them to rest before the soft eye grew dim, and the bright cheek faded? If so, we can mourn with you. We know it all. But I am wandering and I expect you are weary of earthly chat.

Before I close, I will tell you of some persons here, we call poets. They say many pretty things, but, oftentimes, do not have well balanced minds. Instead of talking about the "Man in the Moon," they adopt wild fancies, and from your soft shining call you, "Mother of Light." One of them makes an address to you, and instead of saying, "Son of the Sky," he says, Daughter of Heaven, fair art thou. The silence of thy face is pleasant, Thou cometh forth in loveliness and the stars attend thy bright stepsin

the East. Who is like thee, Daughter of the Night? (Daughter of Night, instead of Man in the Moon.) He asks, "Whither dost thou retire to mourn when the darkness of thy countenance grows. Dwellest thou in the shadow of grief? Have thy sisters fallen from Heaven? He tells you, they have fallen, and that you too, must one day leave your blue path in the heavens. With the hope, that this foolish poet has no idea what is to happen to you in the future, I remain your distant friend.

Read by a Young Lady at an Annual of Hope Institute.

A SCENE THAT ADDS TO THE JOY OF HEAVEN.

The Savior himself gave us the beautiful thought that, we, in our weakness and suffering, can add to the joy of the glorious beings who dwell on high. "There is joy in the presence of the angels of God, over one sinners that repenteth." Angels first announced a deliverer to a lost world and gave glory to God in the highest, for his love to the children of men. It was, to them, a matter of interest so intense, that a multitude of the heavenly host winged their way from the regions of glory to make known to man tidings, that afforded to them, a joy so great.

Angels were, in most ancient times, ministers from God to man, and are still interested in his welfare. When sinners turn from the errors of their way and come, like the prodigal son to the bosom of their father, these pure beings rejoice over them. Angels know the priceless value of man's redemption. They know the blood of heaven was shed to purchase it, and understand what is meant by being driven from the face of God and the glory of his power. They know the happiness human beings are deprived of, hy indulgence in sin, and rejoice when the terms of salvation, offered by Christ, are accepted. Last night, April 7th, there was joy in the presence of the angels over fourteen sinners, who repented, and submitted to the Savior, in our own home. If the repentance of one child of earth gives joy to the inhabitants of the "Beautiful world," above, they rejoice more, when fourteen, mostly in the bloom of youth; take the oath of allegiance to God's Son, and are buried with him in baptism, that they may rise to walk in a new life. We think of these angelic beings, in shining

bands, listening with deep interest to hear the confession that their king—the King of glory—the once helpless babe of Bethlehem, is God's Son, and the Savior of sinners.

It is very sweet to think we have so many friends watching us amid the cares and troubles that beset our pathway, and are rejoicing when we walk as becomes the Gospel of Christ. May the persons who on this night, made so noble an avowal of their faith, never sadden these holy beings, by turning from it, but may they hold on their way firmly to the city above. Then, when the Savior comes to make up his jewels, the angels who listened to their confession, may, with joy welcome them to their glorious home.

C. F.

ADVICE TO YOUNG CHRISTIANS.

FEELING deep interest for all young christians, and particularly for some who, in our home, have lately taken the name of Christ, I write to express it to them, and hope it may not be useless to others, who have obeyed the Savior. I have known all the weakness and temptations of young christians—know how weak they feel and how much help they need. Having just entered the church, the position seems new and strange, there is fear of doing wrong and of walking unworthily of the high calling. Most young persons have an idea of what entering school implies. There is such a thing as entering, and never making much progress, and again, there is great improvement to be derived from it. You, my young friends have just entered the school of Christ, and it depends upon yourselves, whether you will be such pupils as the Great Teacher will, at the close of the session, commend for your faithful attention to all his rules and regulations or whether he will consider you unprofitable students. In this school, there is but one session and no vacation. The Term begins at your entrance, and continues, till a pale messenger knocks at the schoolroom door—tells you, your studies here are ended, your books may be closed and put away, and you may journey with him to the land you have been thinking of, and preparing for—that land, your school book describes.

Let me advise you, now, to study earnestly the volumes, given, by inspiration, for the use of the school. They are the "purest,

the holiest, of all immortal reasons and records," and have a most transforming effect upon all who obey them. You can scarcely form an idea, of the importance, and of governing your conduct by their pure precepts. While you are young is the time to do this. Now, before careless habits settle upon you, is the time to form christian character. Now, while you feel your need of help, study the character of Christ, and imitate it. It is hard to do so, after you get older—hard to learn obedience by the things you suffer. You will not until you have trials and temptations, know how hard it is in all cases, to do right. I recollect a lady once saying, "she did know her own character—did not know the violence of her own feelings, until a trial came which called it forth." She had not brought herself thoroughly under the influence of the injunctions of the Savior, although she had long borne the name of Christ, and when trial came she could not resist its influence. Beside the suffering caused by the discovery, there was deep self reproach for wrong doing. Now, is the time to strengthen the character by a habit of earnest prayer. Without it, your profession will be only nominal. Go to God as you would your own father when your are in need. In the early morning fall at his feet. Thank him for his goodness to you, and most humbly ask his help to do right, in the day you have entered upon. Noon, too, is a good time to spend a few minutes in secret communion, and, in the evening, when all is still, approach the mercy seat, and lift up your heart and voice to him, who waits to answer prayer. By forming a habit of earnest supplication now, it will grow stronger, and be more and more necessary to your happiness. Your influence will be purer, and you will have more respect from young friends and old ones. If there is a lovely character on earth, it is that of a young or old person, thoroughly imbued, with the Spirit of Christ. Difficulties will arise, troubles will come, that you, now, have no idea of. You will have disappointments that are so bitter—so hard to bear, and there is no comfort but in coming to the Father who pities us in our weakness, and invites us to come boldly to a throne of grace, that we may find help in time of trouble.

If you early acquire the habit of telling him your sorrows,—can learn to look to him as your best friend, you will have peace, the world knows not of, and cannot appreciate. Now, is the time to bring your thoughts and feelings under subjection to the pure teaching of the christian religion. That you may do this is the prayer of

C. F.

CHARACTERS, REAL AND UNREAL.

WHY is it, we so much admire the heroes and heroines of fiction and poetry? We become interested in them, almost as if they had real existence, but it is only in proportion as they are natural and life-like, that we take pleasure in the study of them. This being the case, why do we turn to the unreal, instead of looking for characters just as beautiful, living and walking among us—as beautiful as these fancy sketches, and more so. Such persons are in the real every day world—are bearing life's sorrows without a murmur—are giving examples of self-control, of fortitude that have an influence to make others better. They are actuated by noble principles, are performing their duty themselves, to their fellow beings and their God.

Many too, have been laid down to rest, who have left memories, pure and holy. The past has rich treasures in its ample folds—characters of loveliness not to be forgotten.

Some, I call up, died early, before they knew how full of sorrow life may be. Death took them from friends loving and devoted, from hearts that numbered them among their priceless treasures—from arms clung to them, with all the tenderness of which mortals are capable. The thought is pleasant that, although there was suffering in the latter days, true affection was at hand to minister to it; and that if the years of existence were brief, all that existence has most tender, most sacred was crowded into that space. Among others, who rise up from the vanished years, I will mention one, seldom surpassed in beauty of character. Few said her face was beautiful, except those who knew her most intimately. Hers was a beauty of soul. She was intelligent, self-possessed, and most sweet and gentle in manner. Her accomplishments suited her character. Her music soothed and gave pleasure to hearts sad and weary. The consciousness that she was not long for this world, taught her to look to the world where sorrow never comes, where there are no aching hearts, and all is peace and love. She suffered long, before she went to the Spirit land, and her patience and resignation were enough to affect the most thoughtless.

Many met where she was laid to rest, and I do not think one turned away, until the grave was finished, and then all seemed re-

luctant to leave her alone. Why should we not speak of the pure and gentle who live among us, who pass away and leave memories as sweet, as did Miss Araminta Wharton?

"Death came as a friend, and bore her to the distant land, for whose sweet waters she had pined in thirst. Thus it should be —thus crowned with life's best gifts, and all unblemished, earth should give up her treasures unto heaven."

C. F.

BE TRUTHFUL.

The little boys have often seen an old admonition in their copy books, "Speak the Truth. Act the Truth. Think the Truth." They wrote these sentences so often, they did not think, perhaps, how important they are—did not think how important it is always to act the truth, as well as to think, and speak it.

Did a little boy act the truth when he put his Robinson Crusoe inside of his Algebra, and studied very earnestly? When he laid the leaf of his old spelling book in his Latin Reader, for the purpose of looking at a word, he did not know to spell, was he acting the truth? Little boys sometimes do these things and others like them, because they do not always remember to act the Truth. They will perhaps hear again from their

FRIEND.

A GOOD FOUNDATION.

I wonder if the little boys have ever watched men who were building a house, and noticed how carefully they laid the foundation. If the building were large and fine, the foundation was made of great stones—well prepared and firmly placed—perhaps deep in the ground. What would you think of a man who did not take this care? You little boys would laugh at him, and say, "This house will come tumbling down some night, when he is asleep." You would think, "When I build a house it shall have a good foundation. I will put it on a rock, so that the winds cannot blow it away, and the waters will not move it." Each one of you is building a house and you forget it is rising higher every hour. You are building with well prepared stones and hydraulic cement, or carelessly using mud and unhewn rock.

Your house is your character. Do you know a little boy who told a story yesterday? Did you not see one in the street cursing, as angry as a boy could be? You saw another fighting, but you did not follow his example, did you? Such boys are not laying good foundations, and, let me tell you, if you are with them much, you will build your house just like theirs. They are using mud and rough rock. Their building will fall into ruins, when they most need a good shelter—a home of comfort. Let me advise all the little boys, to consider what sort of houses they are building. When they tell the truth—govern all their actions and words—are real little gentlemen, they are laying foundations that will last. Their friends will love for them to build close by, so they may have the pleasure of seeing their houses rise up, well proportioned—well finished.

The little boys will not forget, I hope. At night, ask your mothers, How do you think I have built to-day, Ma? Let each one be certain he is carrying up a firm, good house—a good character, and he will be just such a man as the world needs. That this may be the case, is the earnest wish of your

FRIEND.

PRIMITIVE ORDER.

Brother Henry Hathaway, of Covington, Ky., hopes our efforts may contribute somewhat to the bringing of some to the recollection of the primitive order which, he intimates, "is fast passing from us, especially in the manner of raising money to sustain the Gospel," The divine plan is ignored, he thinks, "and various new ways are substituted in its place." "The world," says our Brother, "is full of inventions, and christians favor them with great injury to the church, which is the only institution on earth, in which to perform spiritual labor."

THANKS.

We are thankful to God and to our beloved brethren, for the many hearty commendations of the Historian. We trust that, we shall become better and better qualified to give satisfactory reports of the Christian religion. Knowing that, the time, remaining, in which to work, is short, it behooves us to be earnest and diligent.

CHRIST HEALING THE SICK.

THE following thoughts were written at the suggestion of our afflicted sister, Mrs. Sallie Averett, who has been confined to her bed, the greater part of two years. She bears her sufferings with patient cheerfulness. No murmur escapes her lips. I hope she will, sometimes, be able to soothe the lassitude of disease, by writing her reflections on the word of God.

C. F.

"And at even when the Sun did set, they brought unto him all that were diseased, and all them that were possessed with devils. And all the city was together at the door, and he healed many that were sick of divers diseases and cast out many devils and suffered not the devils to speak because they knew him." "More than eighteen hundred years have passed away since all these suffering beings were collected round the Son of God, yet, methinks, I see the crowded streets—the mingled throng as they pass forward, bearing their sick to the great Healer. In their eagerness, they are tearing off the roof of a house, that they may let down the afflicted, and lay them at his feet." "The whole city was gathered together at the door." Age in its feebleness was there; Manhood in its prime; the mothers and their little children—the beautiful young daughters of Israel, with their soft glances and raven locks—all stood waiting the word that was to give back to health and strength the feeble mother—the father trembling with palsy—the brother, so noble and dear, covered with leprosy—the young sister possessed with devils. What love and gratitude must have filled all hearts, as the afflicted rose one by one—health and happiness blooming in countenances a few moments before, pale with disease. No doubt they were welcomed with tears of joy by those who had ministered to their sorrows, and how many blessings rose, from their full hearts to the Author of so beautiful a scene. We see Jesus standing there—majestic sweetness enthroned upon his brow, and the happiness, as well as the compassion of a God, beaming from his countenance. Our sister says, "I have often thought, when sickness has laid me low, if like the poor sufferers of old, I could but touch the hem of his garment, and rise up in health, how sweet it would be, and how my heart would swell with gratitude to him. But we must be resigned to suffering as he was. For our light affliction which is but

for a moment, works for us an eternal weight of glory. Let us earnestly ask for help to bow in submission that we may say truly, "thy will be done."

THE CHILDREN OF FRANCE.

A writer in Blackwood, gives a history of the education of the children of this country, and among other matters, first is their communion. He says, "The girls who have never left their mothers, for boarding schools, are better prepared than others, to perform their duties in life. They keep kouse, order dinner, cook, receive the visitors of their mothers, acquire taste and chaem, and know how to use both.

They have passed through that grave moment of their existence. First communion, and its impress remains. From it dates, in many a girl, the formation of her character, the consolidation of her faith, the frank acceptance of her duties and sorrows. It goes home to every heart, its memory rests. An old woman talks of it as, "the great day of my life." The night before this communion the child kneels down and asks her father and mother to pardon all her faults. She goes gravely through the house and begs the same forgiveness from all its other inmates.

When the morning comes, she goes in white all over, shrouded in a long veil, to join her young friends at church. All are prepared by special instruction for two years, for this great day that has come at last. Then amid the roll of music, and all the pomp of ceremony, two columns of young children, march slowly down the aisle and kneel, right and left, the boys on one side, the girls on the other, until they have filled the nave of the church. The building seems half choked with snow, as the white sea of veils spread over it. When the children advance slowly to the altar, there is not a dry eye around. Each father and mother watches eagerly for its own, and, afterwards, if death should take them while still young, that is the instant of their lives, which is best and most tearfully remembered. If the spectacle unnerves men and makes women sob, what must be its effect on the child herself? Putting aside the moral influence, what must be the work wrought out in little hearts by so great sensation? The intensi-

ty of prayer, at such a moment provokes new, ardent feelings, a vista of joy and love and resolute good intentions, If ever human nature faintly grows like angel nature, it must be at a First Communion."

PARDON OF SINS.

Is a matter of discussion among people who are very sincere. They differ across the whole heavens. Many weep even now, when the Son of God has died to save them—weep for an assurance of the pardon of sin, and would give the world for a promise on which they could rest with firm confidence. It was not so in times of old. The Jews had a law that promised them forgiveness, and they would as soon have expected the heavens to fall, as for God to fail when they complied with the conditions offered them. For a certain sin, a Jew took a lamb—went to the priest,—confessed his sin, the priest made the offering and the promise to him was, you shall be forgiven. A Gentile meets him on his way to the temple. Where are you going with that lamb? What are you going to do with him? I am going to be pardoned. What good can a lamb do you? Let us kneel down here, and *pray* for pardon. The Jew might have prayed forty years, as persons often do now, and have had no assurance he was forgiven. He was obliged to do what he found in his law, and then, he rested with perfect confidence on the promise of God.

Can it be that after God's own Son has died for us—died to save us from sin, that there is no certainty we are pardoned? Is there no law we can rest on in life, and in death; and believe as surely as we comply with its terms, that God forgives us? There was a law given to the murderers of Christ, and no other, has since been offered to man. If *they* were pardoned, it seems that all human beings may, now, have hope. They asked what they should do, when convinced that the man they had crucified, was the Son of God. Peter told them to repent and be baptized for the remission of sins. They gladly received his word, and thousands complied with the conditions in perfect confidence, that all their sins would be blotted out. What a change! They passed at once from the kingdom of the devil, to the kingdom of Christ —to all the hopes and privileges of the children of God. One might ask, can baptism forgive sins. It did not in the case o

these murderers. Faith in Christ changed their hearts, repentance changed their lives and baptism changed their state, Their first act of submission to Christ, was baptism, and what an exhibition of his love to the worst sinners, that he was willing to receive and pardon them, the first time they turned in sorrow to him. They came with all their sins about them—came as murderers, begging that the stain of blood, the blood of heaven—might be washed from their guilty souls. They laid down their arms of rebellion—submitted to Christ in baptism and in that act, he promised to forgive their sins.

The same promise is now extended to all the children of earth, freely, as to these sinners at Jerusalem. It is so simple, all can understand, and comply with its conditions. If they do so with humble, repentant hearts, they have the word of God, that he will blot out their sins and remember them no more.

C. F.

ACCESSIONS.

WITHIN a few weeks past between twenty and thirty rejoicing converts, have been placed amongst the disciples at Franklin College. Some have come from the denominations.

AT a meeting recently held by Jessee Sewell, of McMinnville, Tenn., at Franklin Ky. there were some 23 additions.

UNDER the labors, mainly, of Bro. E. G. Sewell, some 8 or 10 young persons in Edgefield, recently obeyed the Gospel.

FLORIDA.

Brother C. H. Eastman, of Pensacola, Florida, writes that Bro. Varney and wife with himself are the only disciples in that section, but they fail not to meet on the first day of the week to break bread, and to attend to the service of God. The promise is that, where two or three are met in the name of the Lord, they shall find blessings.

SAD.

MANY noble young men in various sections of our country have recently been striken down by Meningitis. The Lord knows what is best, and we have no ground to complain.